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RENDERING ANTHROPONYMS IN FICTION

Abstract: The rendering of proper nouns and, in particular, anthroponyms, defined as names of persons, has been studied for years. However, it is still a matter of dispute among the researchers. This article reviews the main difficulties of rendering anthroponyms into Russian and the peculiarities of this process in fiction distinguished by linguists, along with the other factors, which may influence the choice of a name to appear in a target text. This issue is especially relevant for the translators, who work with fiction, as some factors appear more often in this type of texts. The authors review and unite different rendering techniques, which had been offered and described by linguists, and provide possible examples from «Harry Potter» book series written by J.K. Rowling, which contains a vast number of personal names. This article may be helpful for the students studying linguistics and translation or for the translators dealing with fiction.

Keywords: translation, anthroponyms, proper nouns, rendering proper nouns, translation techniques.

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ПЕРЕДАЧА АНТРОПОНИМОВ В ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННЫХ ТЕКСТАХ

Аннотация: Передача имён собственных, и, в частности, антропонимов (личных имён, фамилий, прозвищ и т.п.), изучается годами. Тем не менее, в научной среде этот вопрос остаётся спорным. В этой статье рассмотрены основные трудности, связанные с передачей антропонимов на русский язык, и особенности этого процесса в художественной литературе, выделенные лингвистами, наряду с другими факторами, которые могут влиять на выбор варианта перевода имени. Эта проблема особенно актуальна для переводчиков, которые работают с художественной литературой, так как некоторые из этих факторов чаще появляются в подобных текстах. Авторы рассматривают и объединяют различные стратегии, которые предложены и описаны лингвистами, и приводят примеры в случаях, где это возможно, из серии книг «Гарри Поттер» авторства Дж. К. Роулинг, в которой представлено огромное количество имён. Эта статья может быть полезна для студентов, изучающих лингвистику и перевод, или для тех, кто занимается переводом художественной литературы.

Ключевые слова: перевод, антропонимы, имена собственные, передача имён собственных, техники перевода.

All nouns are divided into common, which designate anything of a class of beings or things (e.g. a ship, a feeling) and proper, which denote particular objects (e.g. the Eiffel Tower). Proper nouns are subdivided into some groups, among which anthroponyms are found. The latter are defined as persons' names.

Although there is a popular opinion that proper nouns, and especially names of persons, should not be translated, researchers agree that in most contexts translation should be provided. To choose the rendering technique one should consider several factors described by D.I. Yermolovich:

- national features of the name, that is to say, phonetic and/or graphical features typical for the language, from which the name originally came, that should be preserved in some contexts;
- its possible similarity to obscene words of target language, which imply some necessary changes to be made in the anthroponym;
- its various interchangeable forms and variations according to the rules of the source language, which may not look like the same name for the foreigners;
- existing tradition, which is especially important when rendering historical, religious, mythological, and literary names;
- its future ability to form new words in a target language;
- characterizing components of the name, i.e. those components that bear some meaning and should be translated in some contexts;
- practical task [5].

These factors determine the choice of the rendering technique while rendering all types of proper nouns.

This choice is especially difficult in translation of fiction. According to A.V. Kalashnikov, all persons' names have nominal function, but some of them also «can play an important role in literature by evoking, for example, an epoch, social status, or nationality of the characters» [2]. Moreover, given and family names can perform a descriptive or characterizing function in fiction, which should not be lost in translation (A. Kalashnikov calls them significant names). However, S. Vlachov and S. Florin point out, though, that one should distinguish between significant names and those which have only nominal function to render anthroponyms correctly [4].

L. Fernandes says that some fictional names also possess the sound symbolic meaning [3].

The number and essence of the techniques distinguished by different researchers vary widely. However, all of them can be found among those listed below.

Every technique is illustrated with an example found in the translation of «Harry Potter» book series, written by J.K. Rowling (printed by the Rosman Publishing House). The series was chosen because it

contains a large number of names, some of them having characterizing components.

Transcription means an attempt to convey the sound form of the anthroponym with the letters of the alphabet of target language. This technique, however, presents difficulties when some sounds of source language do not even partially correspond to the sounds of the target language.

Some of the names in the series are rendered this way, for instance: *Dudley* – *Дадли*; *Ron Weasley* – *Рон Уизли*.

Transliteration is an attempt to convey the spelling of the name with the closest corresponding letters of target language. It is usually not used when the alphabets of source and target language differ significantly (e.g. Russian and English), although it may be combined with other methods, especially transcription.

Transliteration is also used to render some names, e.g. *Ignotus Peverell* – *Игнотус Певерелл*. Sometimes it is combined with transcription: *Dursley* – *Дурсль*.

Morphogrammatic modification (a term used by D.I. Yermolovich) changes the name so it conforms to the grammar of the target language. It is, for instance, widely used in rendering of women's names into Russian.

It is hard to say whether we find it in «Harry Potter» books but we assume it being one of the strategies used in rendering such names as *Alice* – *Алиса*, *Olympe* – *Олимпия*, *Bellatrix* – *Беллатриса*.

Conventionality is a strategy which implies replacing an anthroponym from the source language with its conventionally accepted equivalents. Names of historical, religious figures and mythological characters are often rendered this way.

As some names from «Harry Potter» refer to mythological, literary or historical characters, translators have chosen the following equivalents for them: *Hermione* – *Гермиона*, *Horace* – *Горацій* etc.

Substitution means replacing a name from source language with some other name, which is not connected with the original one but is contextually linked to the other elements of the text. According to L. Fernandes, «the TL name and the SL name exist in their respective referential worlds, but are not related to each other in terms of form and/or semantic significance» [3].

This technique explains, for instance, changing *Luna* to *Полумна* to preserve further play on words: *Luna* – *Loony* and *Полумна* – *Полоумная*.

Rendition, or **loan translation**, is a way to render a semantically motivated anthroponym consisting of words which have already existed in the source language before. These words are translated to the target language and therefore the name is literally translated. This can also be done with some parts of a name and not the whole name.

«Harry Potter» translation provides a lot of examples of loan translated anthroponyms, e.g.: *Sprout* – *Стебель*, *Fat Lady* – *Полная Дама*.

Recreation is replacing a name from source text with a newly invented name. The name in the target text is aimed to reproduce the similar effect in the target cultural setting. One should note that both names are neologisms which do not exist in source or target language.

This technique is presumably used in rendering the name *Mundungus* into *Наземникус*.

Deletion means removing an anthroponym or a part of it from the text as it is of little importance for the narrative. It may happen in the process of translating a fictional text.

For instance, there is a passage in the original text: «*Anyway, we've got to go, Lee Jordan reckons he's found a new secret passageway out of the school.*» «*Bet it's that one behind the statue of Gregory the Smarmy that we found in our first week. See you.*» The second sentence was not included in Russian translation: « – *Ладно, нам пора идти, – наконец спохватились близнецы. – Ли Джордан уверяет, что нашел новый потайной коридор, через который можно выбраться из школы*»

One more strategy is the exact **replication** of the name without any changes. Speaking of anthroponyms, L. Fernandes suggests it may be caused by such factor as «brand» properties of the name [3]. According to D.I. Yermolovich, this tendency is also found in Russian academic literature [6]. It seems, however, to be absent in rendering fictional names from English into Russian. We assume that this occurs due to the major differences in Latin and Cyrillic alphabets.

There is also a strategy called **phonological replacement**. It means choosing the name from target language as a substitution for the original name of source language. The choice is based on the phonological features of the name in the source text. However, D.I. Yermolovich notes that this strategy, once popular among Russian translators, is not recommended to use anymore [6]. It is not found in «Harry Potter» translation, either.

This allows making the conclusion that some anthroponyms in fictional texts present difficulties in translation, which occur mostly due to the characterizing components. However, there are a lot of strategies which can be used in rendering anthroponyms, and most of them can be applied to fictional names.

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